

12 September 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

3330 '99 SEP 17 A9:59

Subject: Docket nos. 98N-1230, 96P-0418, and 97P-0197

To Whom It May Concern,

To reduce the occurrence of *Salmonella* in eggs requires more than warning labels and regulating egg refrigeration temperatures. The most direct and effective way to reduce *Salmonella* would be to eliminate the practice of forced molting.

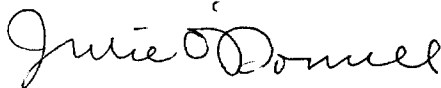
In North America alone, approximately 195 million hens are subjected to forced molting each year. The birds are deprived of food for up to two weeks, water is restricted for up to eight weeks, and they are kept in pitch dark for weeks on end. The hens' systems are thrown into collapse. Hundreds of thousands die outright. Those who do survive are weak, shed all their feathers, and lose up to 35 percent of their body weight. Forced molting also weakens hens' bones, resulting in fragile, broken limbs.

Recent research, including a study conducted by U.S. government scientists, demonstrated that forced molting increases the frequency and severity of *S. enteritidis* in hens. The stressful conditions weaken the hens' immune systems so badly that they become prone to disease and *Salmonella* infections, resulting in sick birds and contaminated eggs. These contaminated eggs pose a direct risk to human health.

Please disallow forced molting as an acceptable practice in the United States.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Julie O'Donnell
1099 Taylor Street
Eugene, Oregon 97402-4766

98N 1230

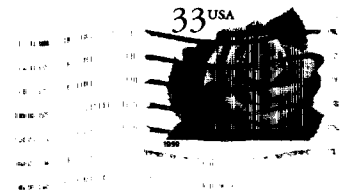
C623

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION
CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

Docket Number/Item Code: 98N-1230/C623

See Docket Number/Item Code: 97P-0197/C624
96P-0418/C623

Julie O'Donnell
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Eugene, Oregon 97402-4766



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